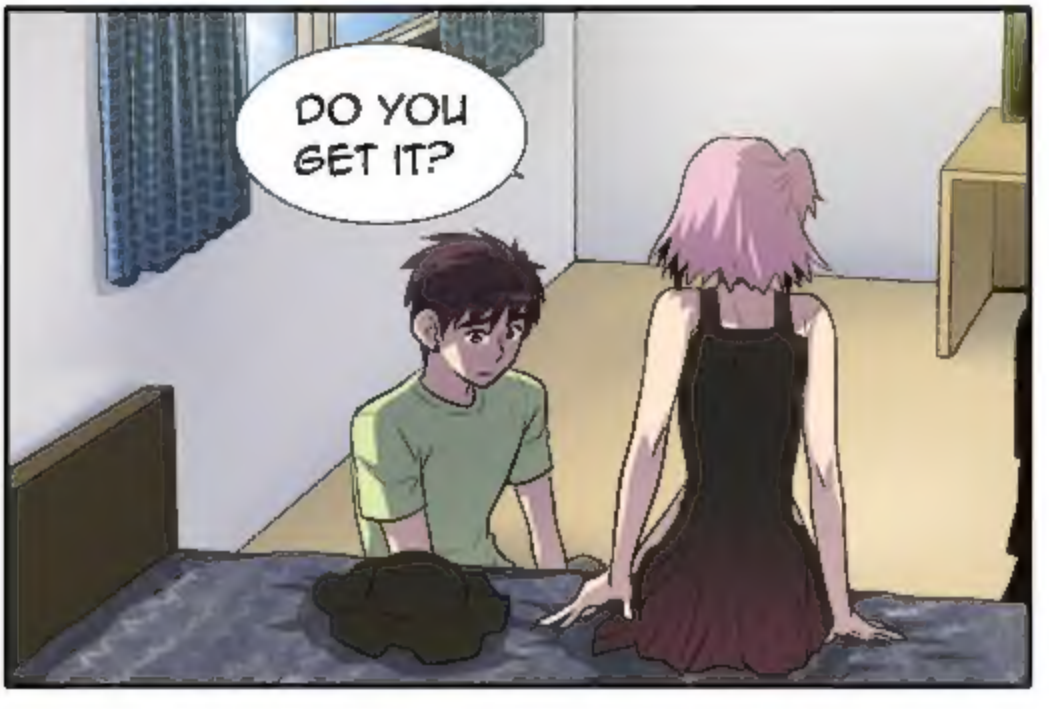
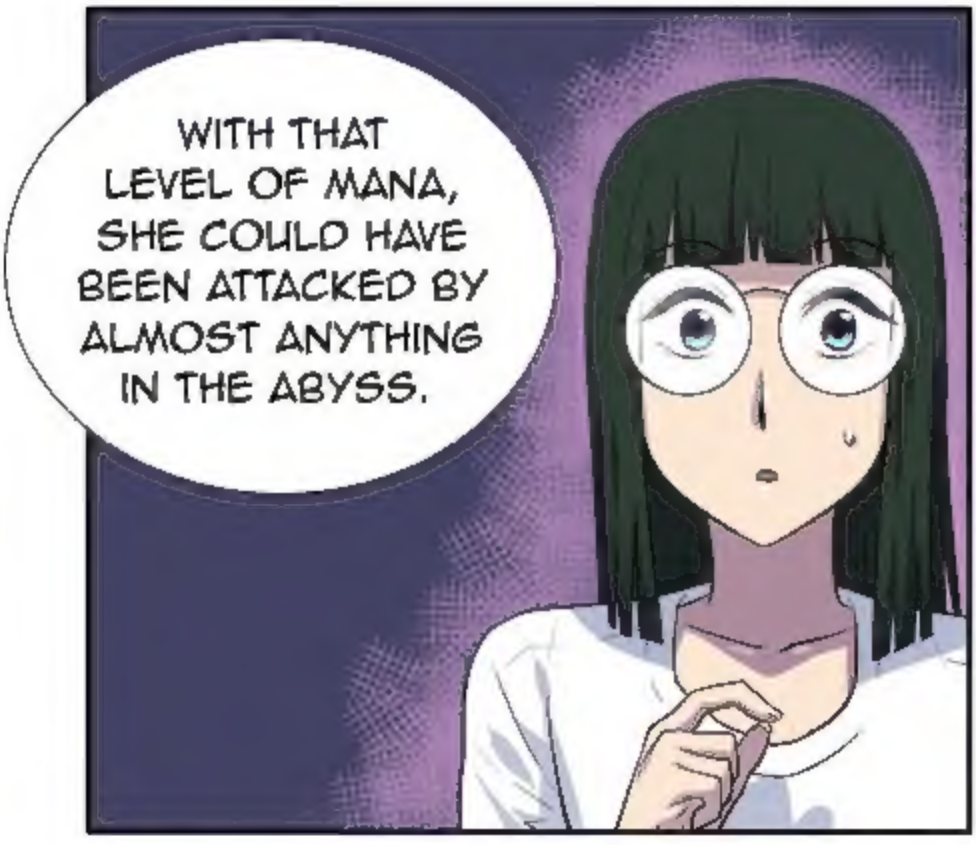
THE GAMER

STORY BY SANGYOUNG SEONG
ILLUST BY SANG-A



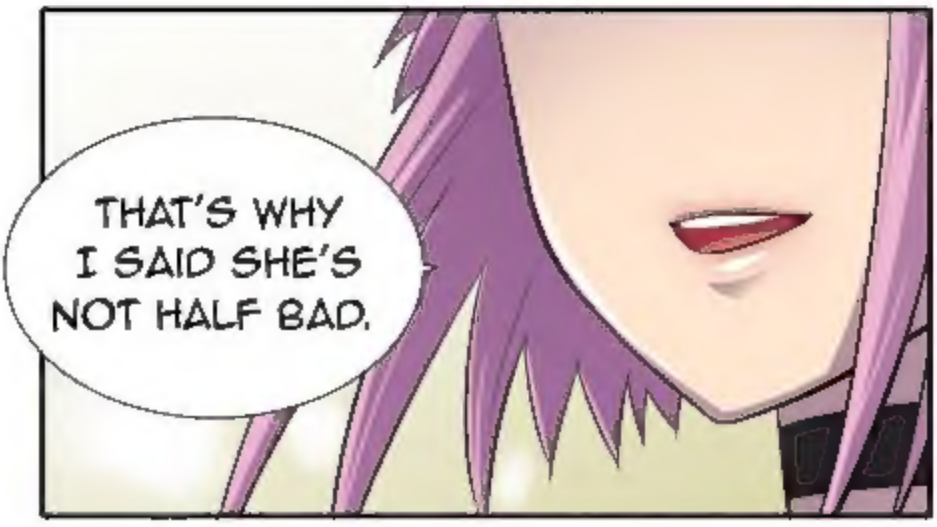

WITH THAT LEVEL OF MANA, SHE COULD HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY ALMOST ANYTHING IN THE ABYSS.

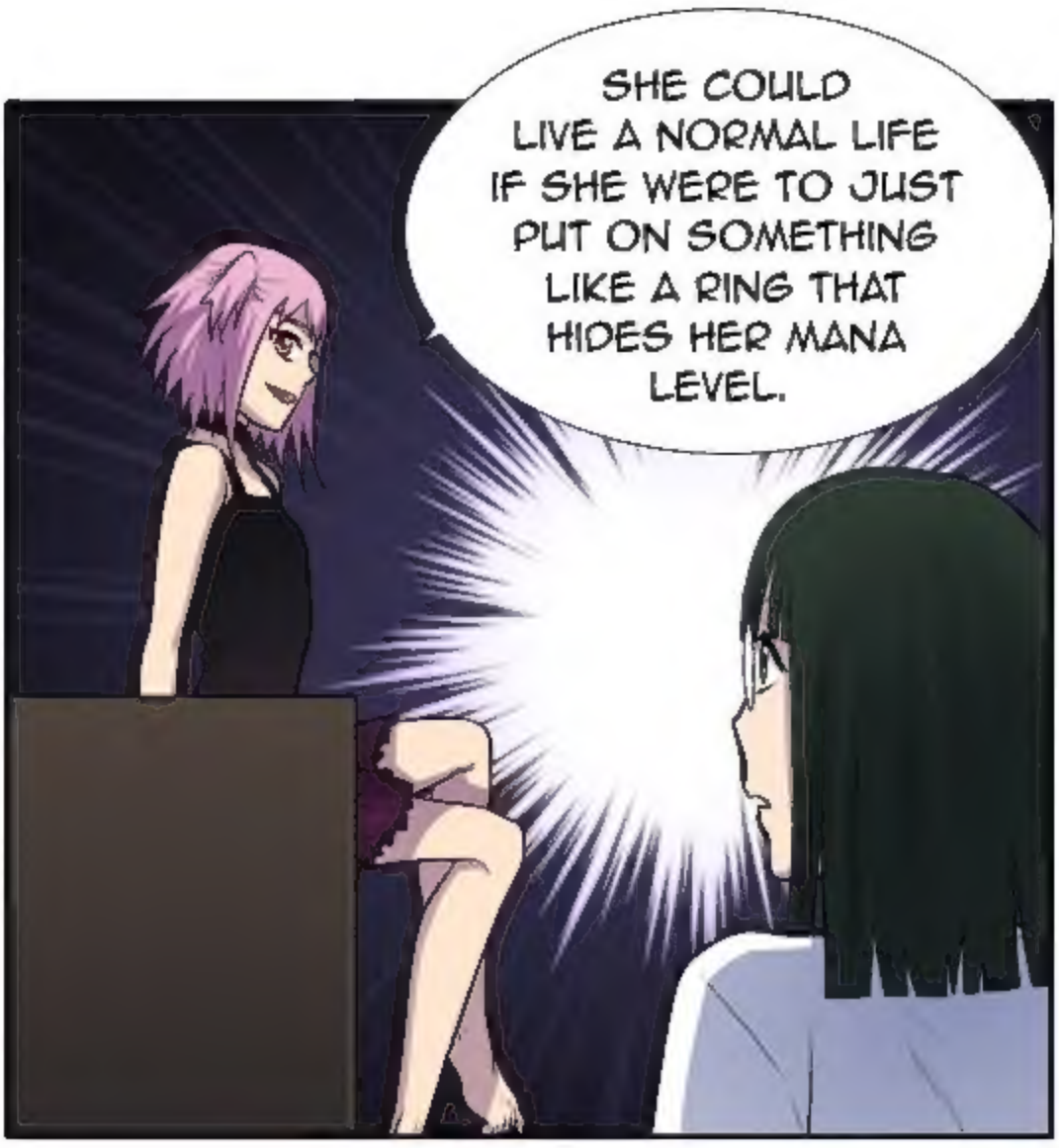
YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IT YOURSELF, JIHAN.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THOUGHTLESS THIS WAS OF YOU?

I'M SORRY...

S-SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?


THAT'S WHY I SAID SHE'S NOT HALF BAD.


SHE COULD LIVE A NORMAL LIFE IF SHE WERE TO JUST PUT ON SOMETHING LIKE A RING THAT HIDES HER MANA LEVEL.

I HAD NO IDEA THAT KIND OF THING EXISTED!

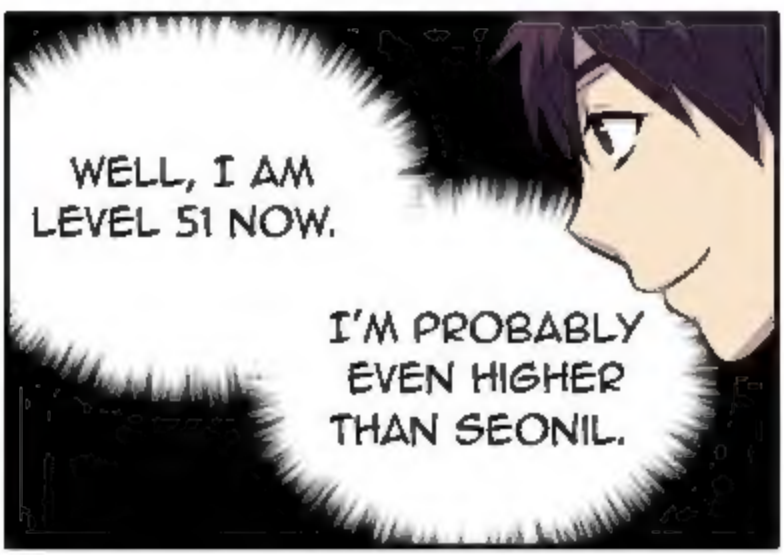
WAIT. THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU OFFER SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO ME?

SIIIGH

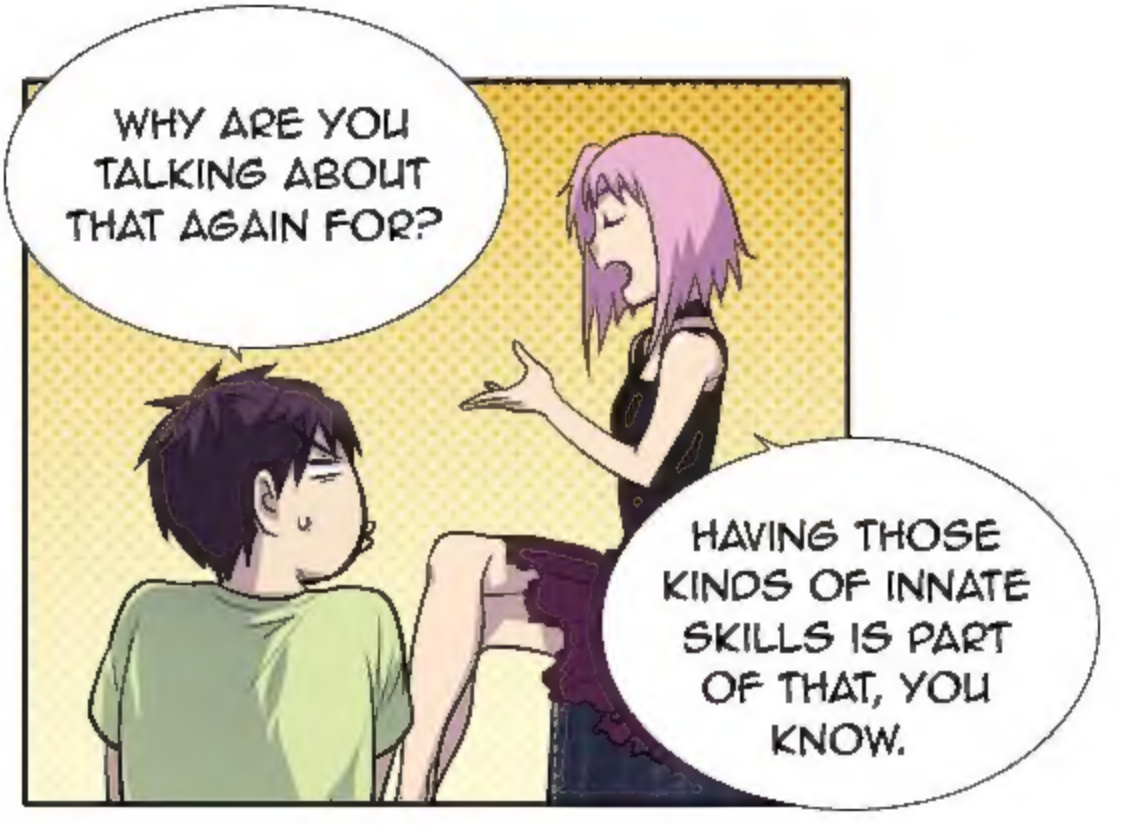
BECAUSE YOU DECIDED TO LIVE IN THE ABYSS, REMEMBER?
AH, RIGHT...
EVEN NOW, YOU'RE MAKING MONEY BY DIGGING ITEMS UP EVERY DAY...

PLUS, YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY SINCE YOU CAN PRETTY MUCH BEAT ANYONE EXCEPT FOR MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS.

AH. R-REALLY?


WELL, I AM LEVEL 51 NOW.
I'M PROBABLY EVEN HIGHER THAN SEONIL.

I MAY LACK PHYSICAL SKILLS, BUT AS A MAGICIAN...
ANYWAY... THIS IS WHY YOU CAN'T HAVE NICE THINGS.

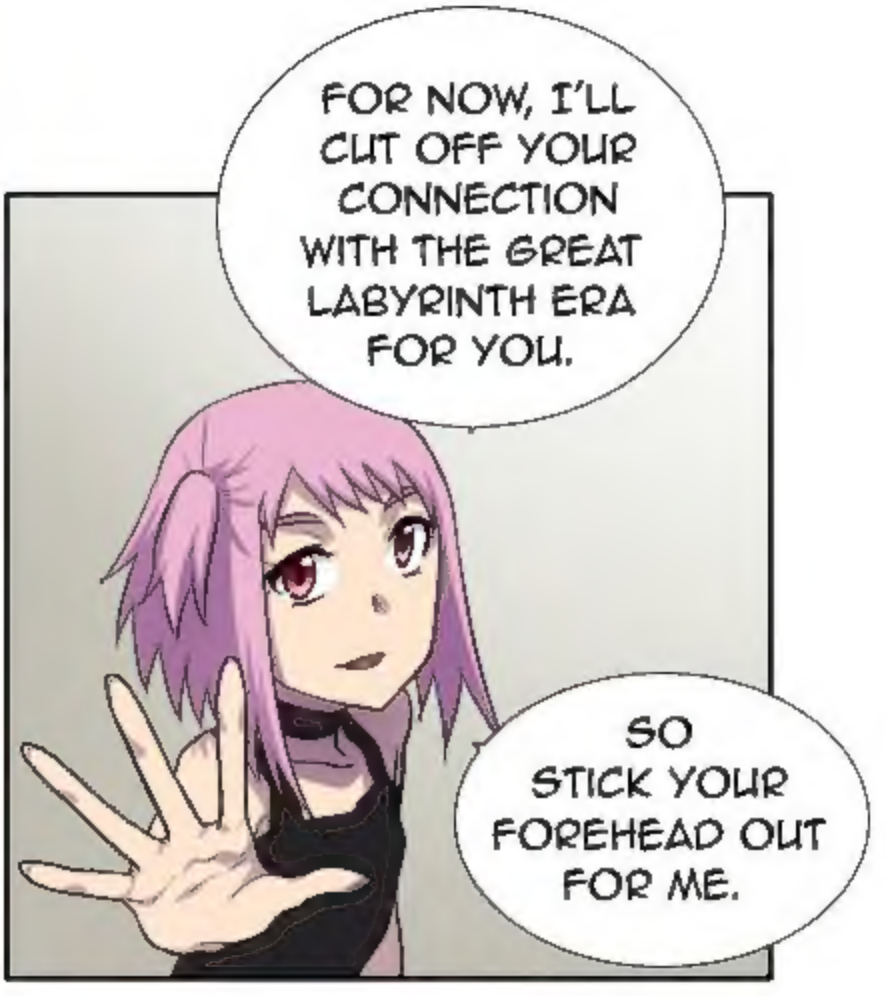

WHY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THAT AGAIN FOR?
HAVING THOSE KINDS OF INNATE SKILLS IS PART OF THAT, YOU KNOW.

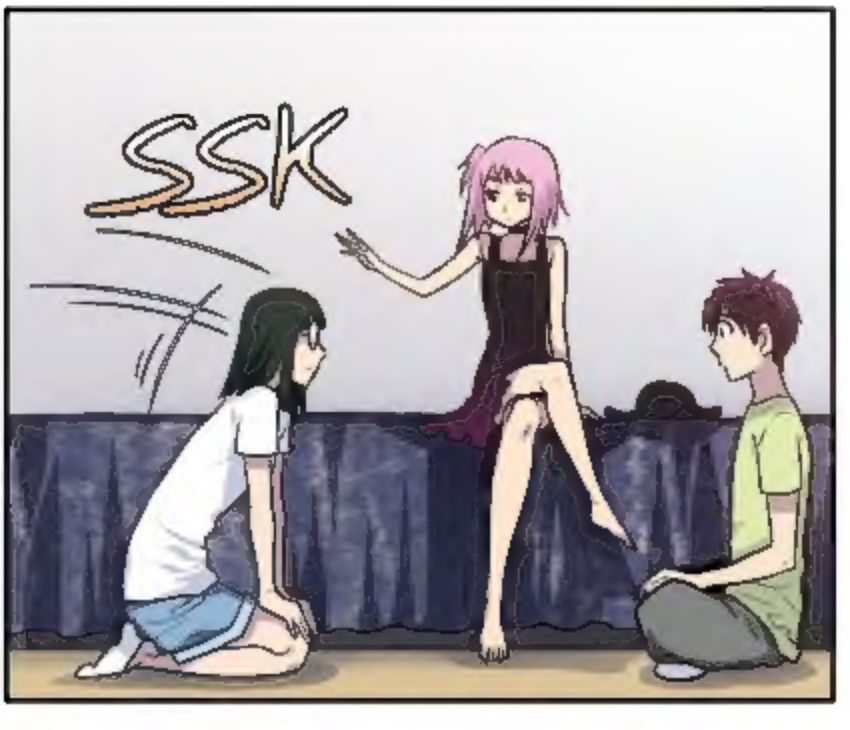
BUT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW SINCE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN THROUGH ANY REALLY HARD TIMES.

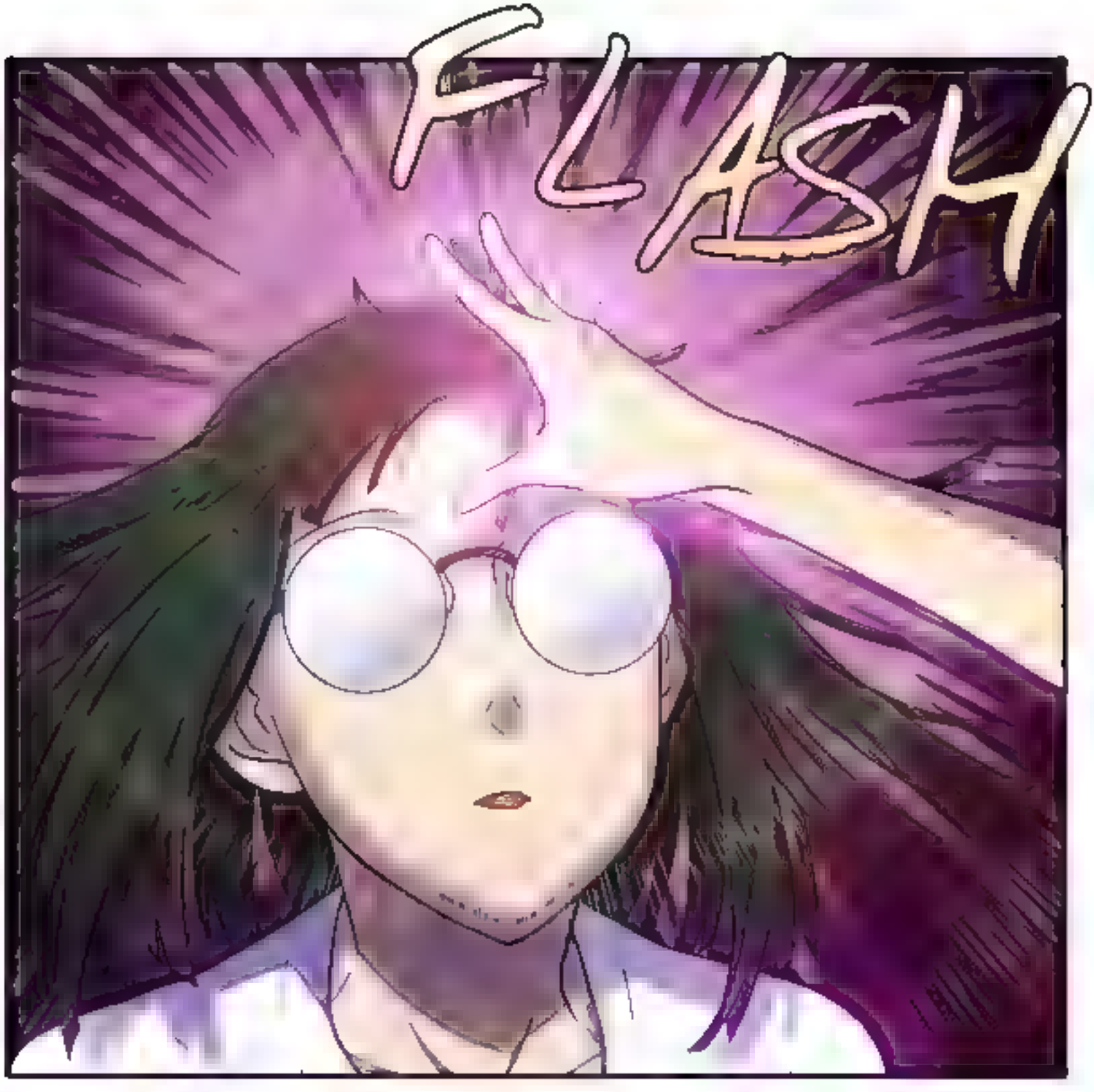
UGH... I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY.

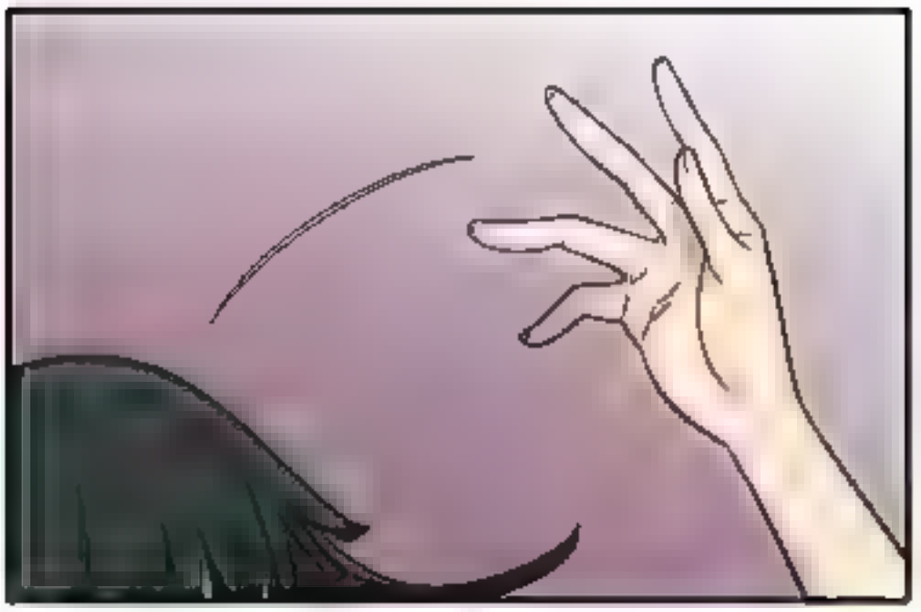
ANYWAY... PREZ.

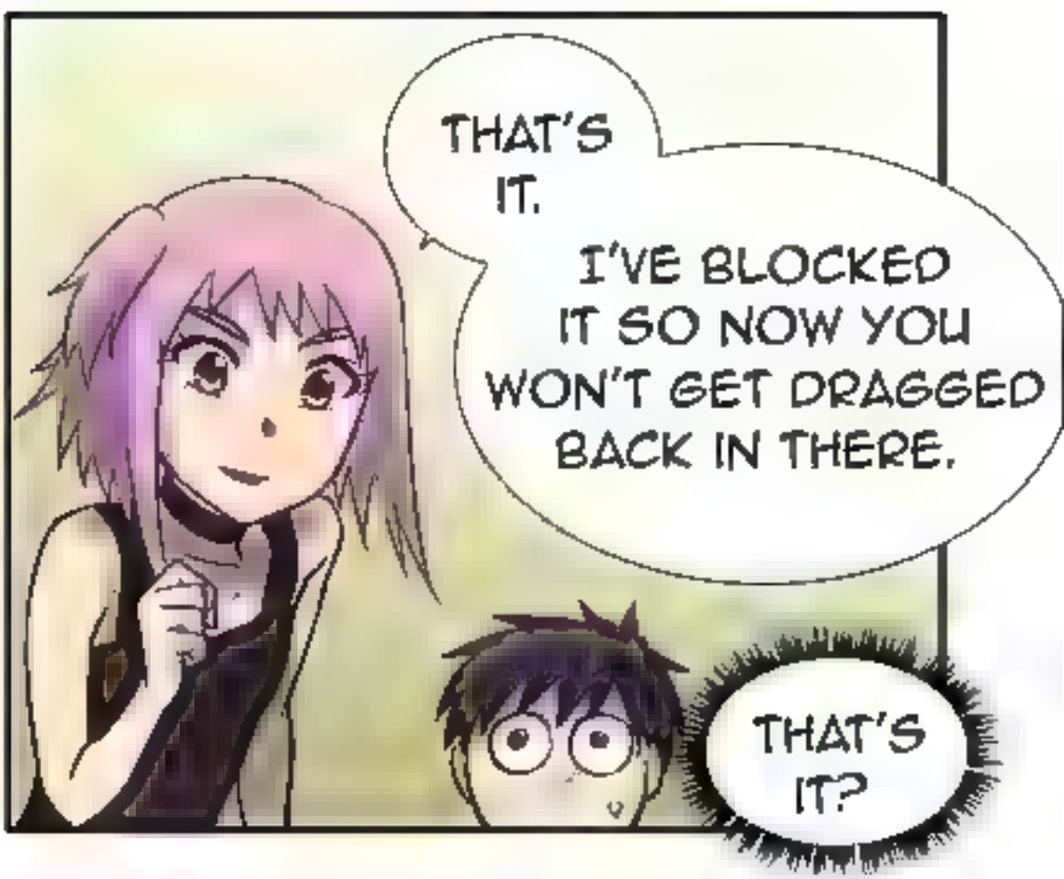
AH, YES?!

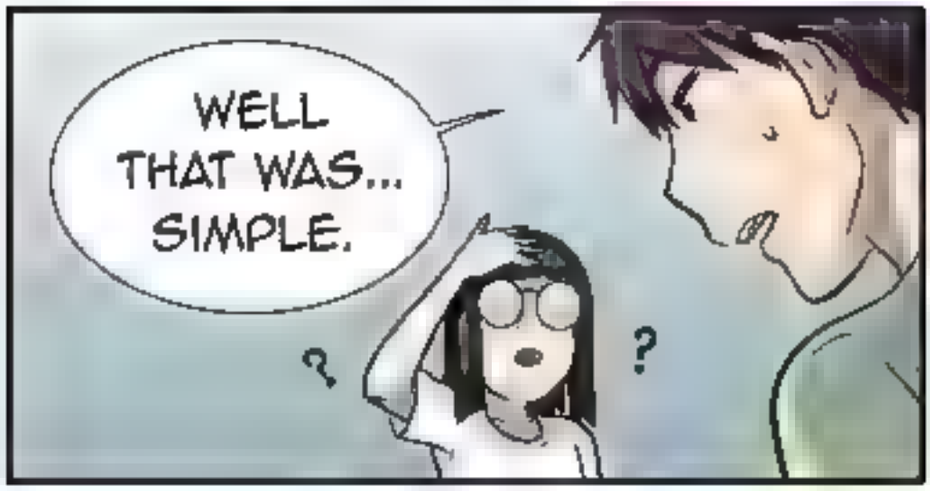

FOR NOW, I'LL CUT OFF YOUR CONNECTION WITH THE GREAT LABYRINTH ERA FOR YOU.
SO STICK YOUR FOREHEAD OUT FOR ME.

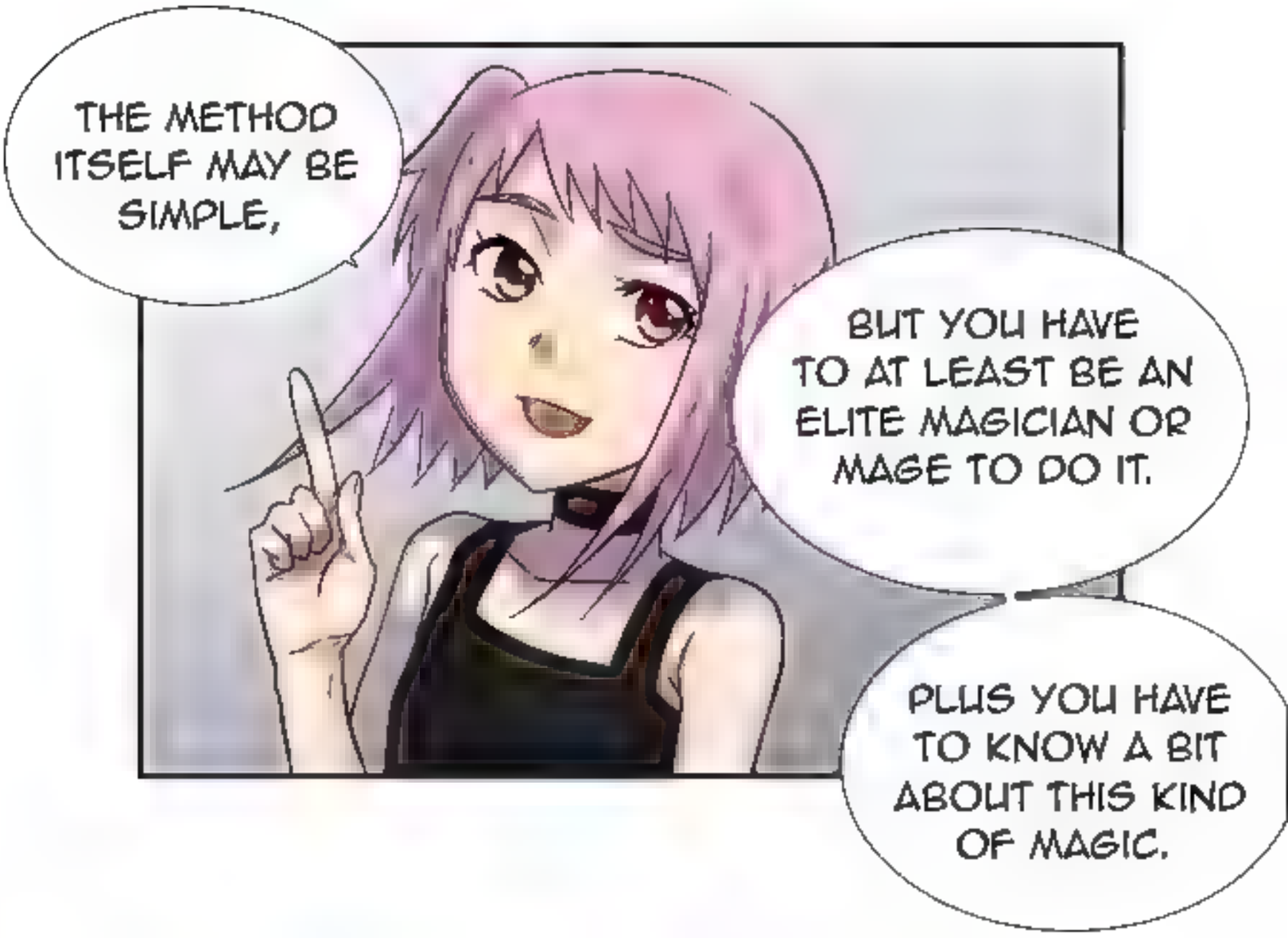

SSK


FLASH

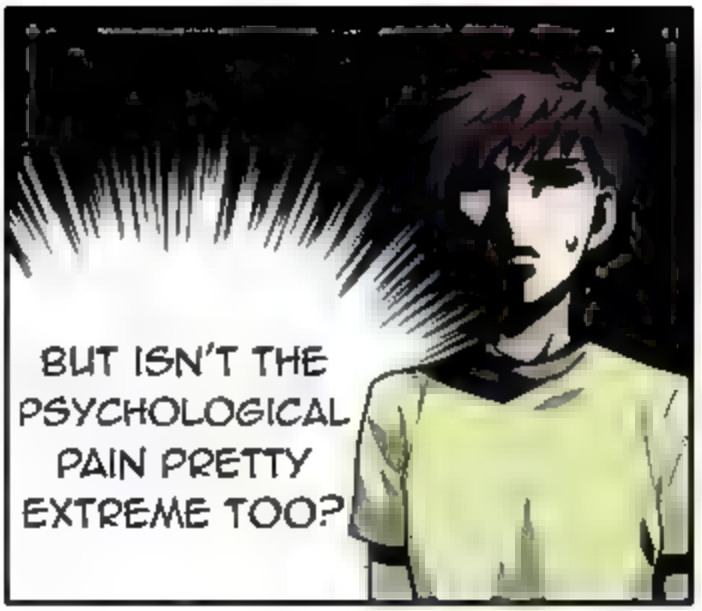


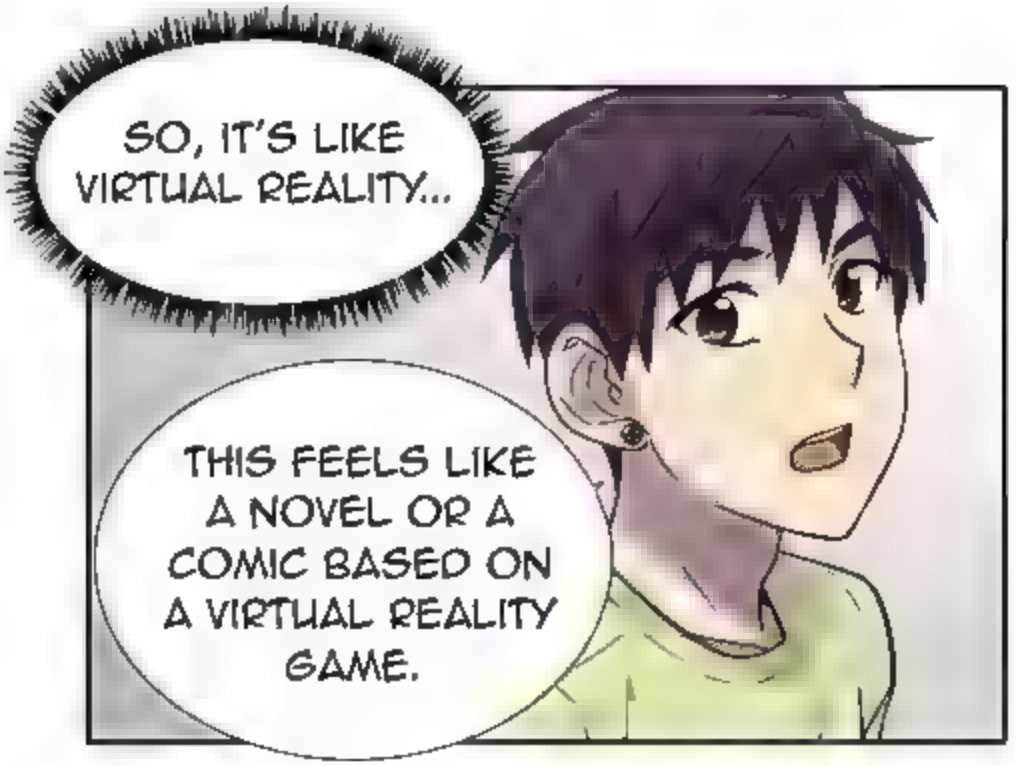

THAT'S IT.
I'VE BLOCKED IT SO NOW YOU WON'T GET DRAGGED BACK IN THERE.
THAT'S IT?

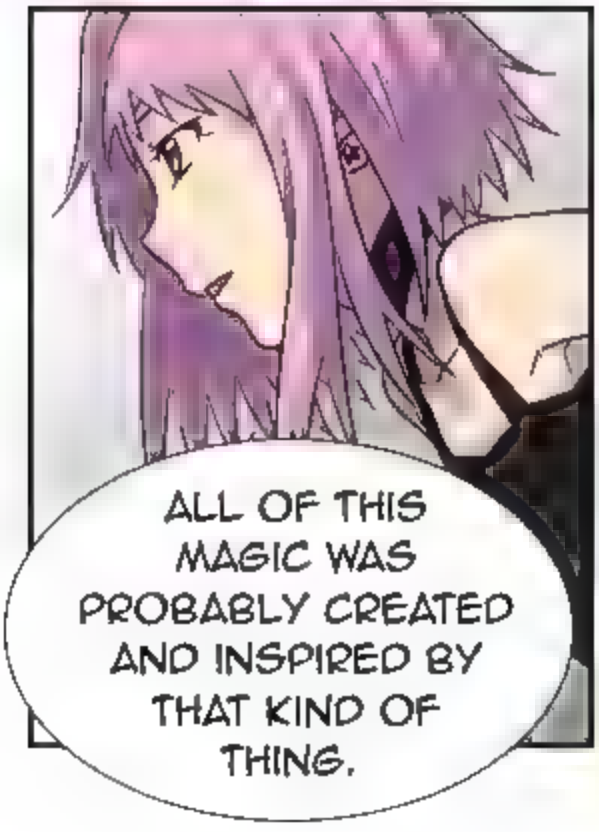

WELL THAT WAS... SIMPLE.
?
?

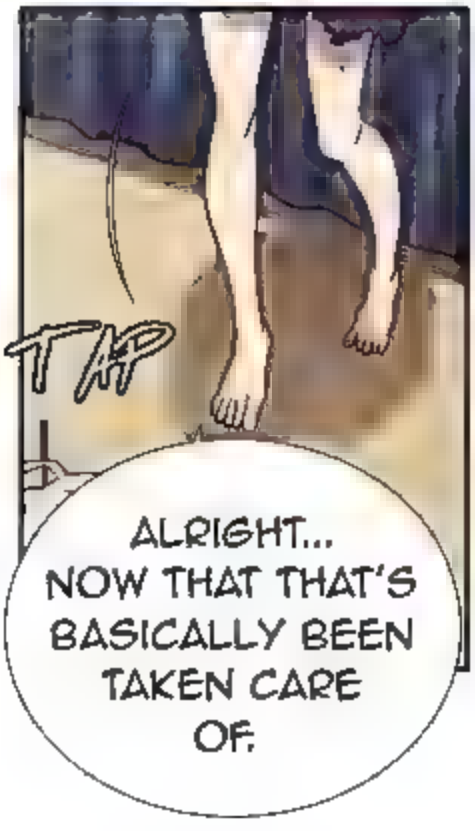

THE METHOD ITSELF MAY BE SIMPLE,
BUT YOU HAVE TO AT LEAST BE AN ELITE MAGICIAN OR MAGE TO DO IT.
PLUS YOU HAVE TO KNOW A BIT ABOUT THIS KIND OF MAGIC.

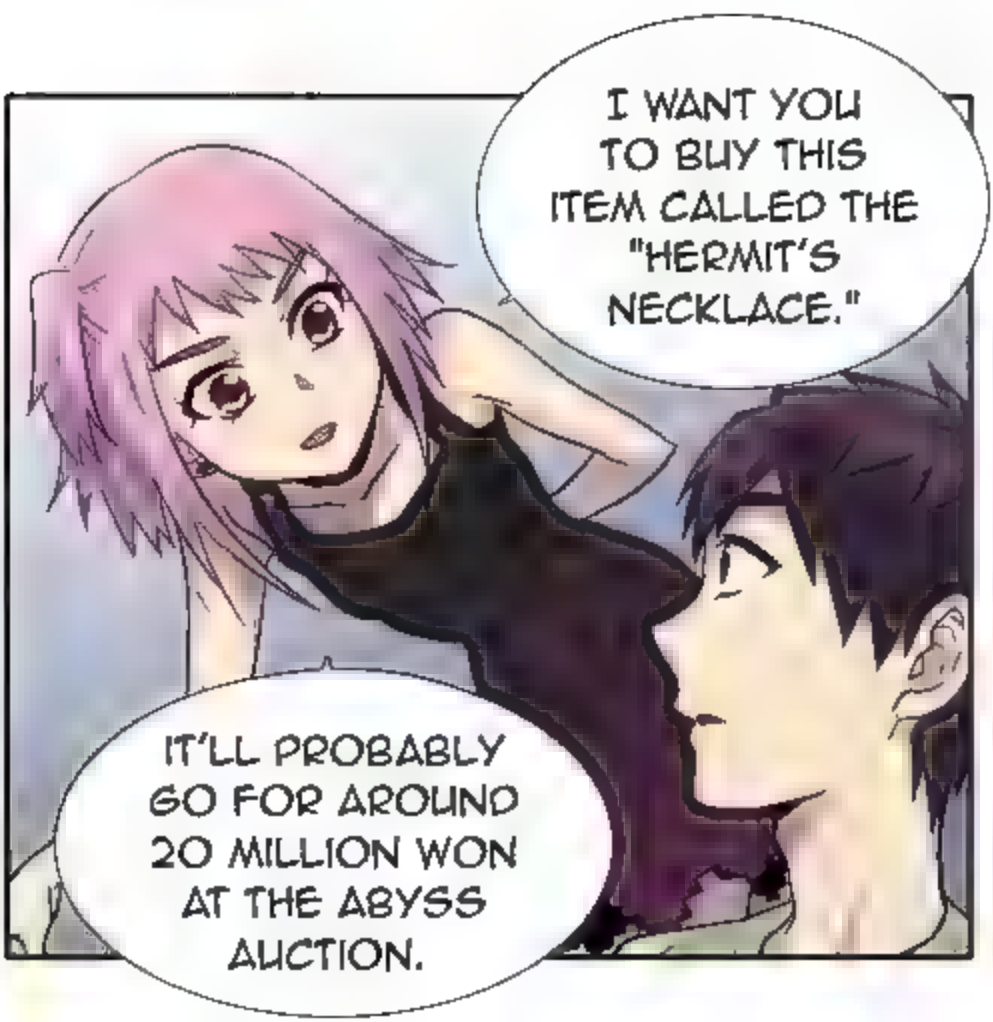
IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC THAT CONNECTS YOUR MIND TO AN IMAGINARY SPACE.
Z
Z
Z
IT'S SORT OF LIKE AN OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE.
I DIED
I WAS DEAD
AAAHHH!
EVEN IF YOU DIE OR GET HURT IN THERE, IT HAS NO EFFECT ON REALITY.
ALTHOUGH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN MAY REMAIN.


BUT ISN'T THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN PRETTY EXTREME TOO?

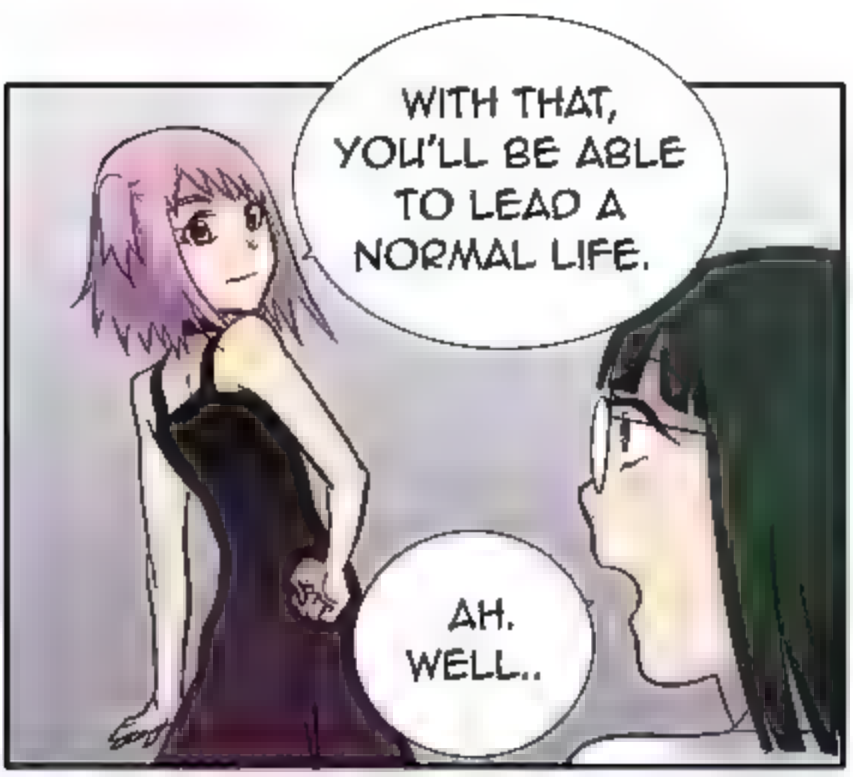

SO, IT'S LIKE VIRTUAL REALITY...
THIS FEELS LIKE A NOVEL OR A COMIC BASED ON A VIRTUAL REALITY GAME.

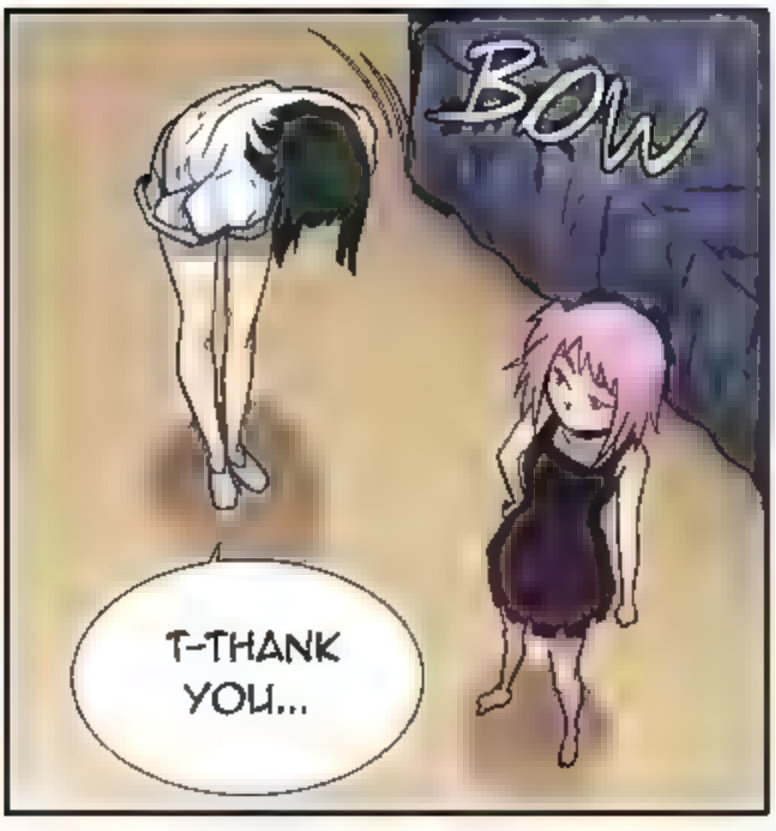

ALL OF THIS MAGIC WAS PROBABLY CREATED AND INSPIRED BY THAT KIND OF THING.

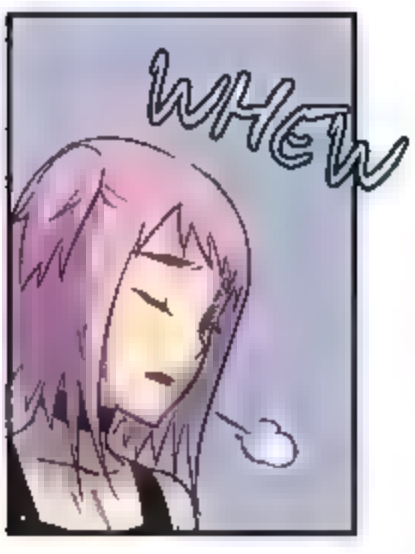

TAP
ALRIGHT... NOW THAT THAT'S BASICALLY BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.

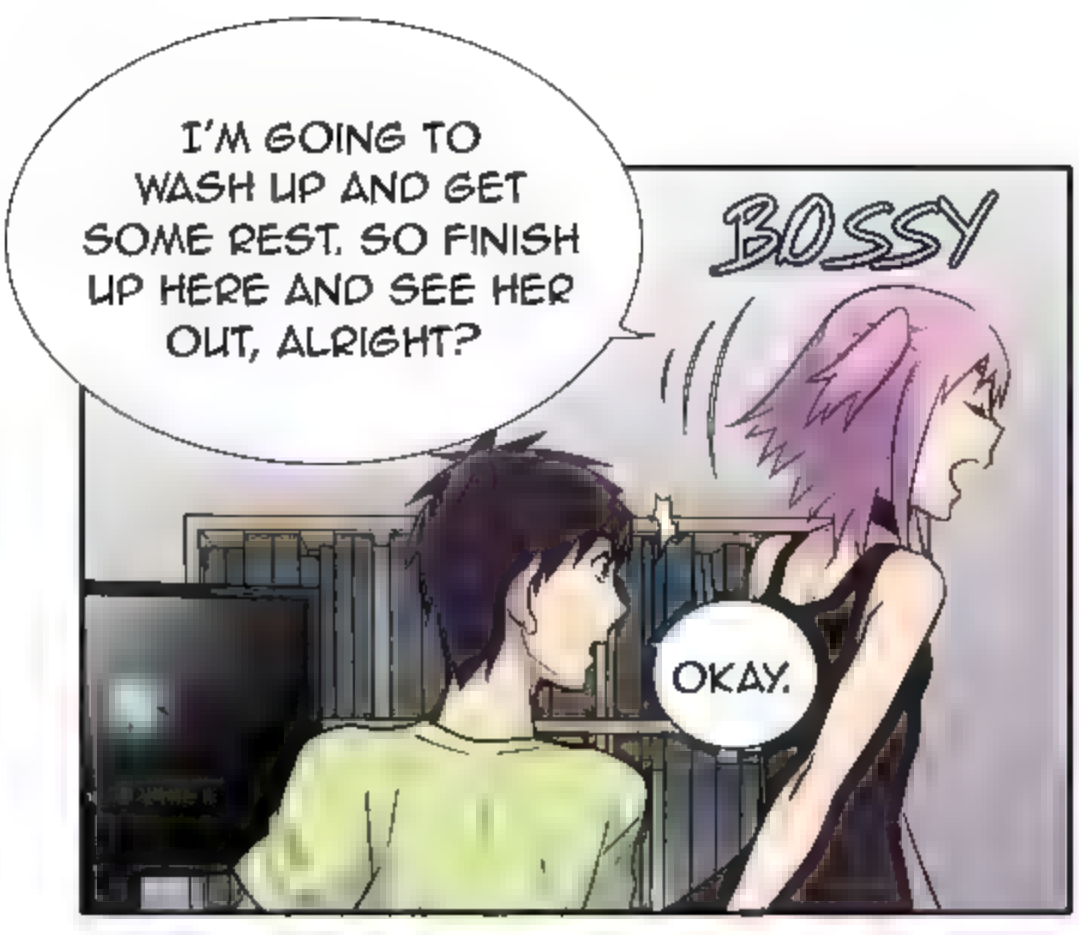

I WANT YOU TO BUY THIS ITEM CALLED THE "HERMIT'S NECKLACE."
IT'LL PROBABLY GO FOR AROUND 20 MILLION WON AT THE ABYSS AUCTION.

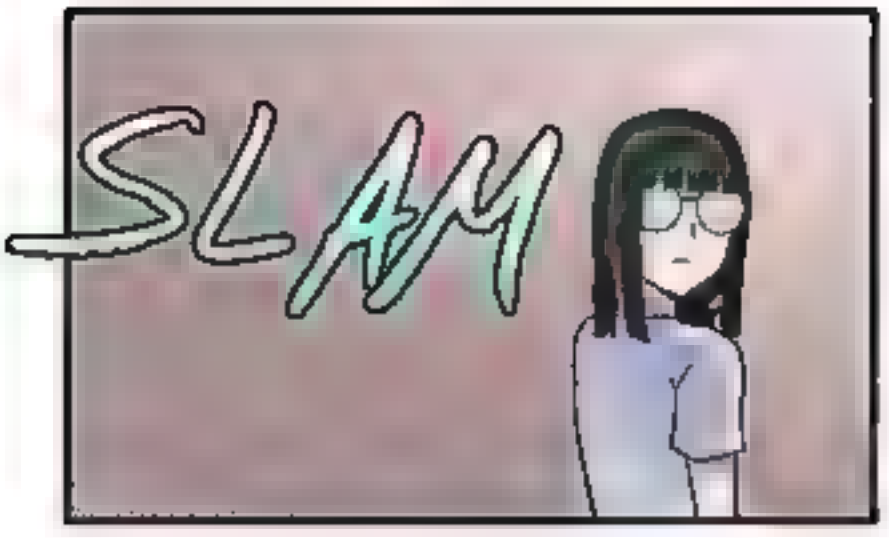
AH, OKAY.
DO I HAVE TO BUY THAT TOO...?
WELL, I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER SINCE I'M RAKING IN SO MUCH MONEY.

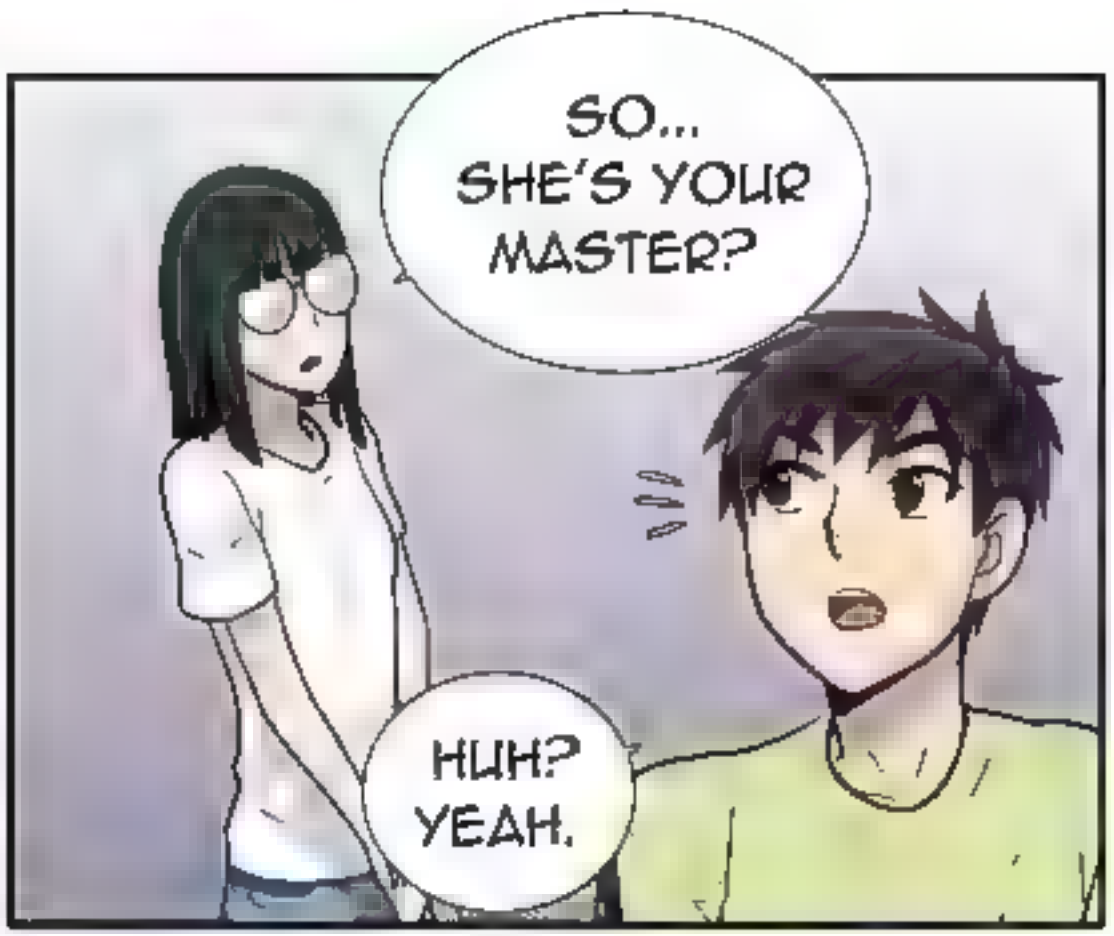

WITH THAT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LEAD A NORMAL LIFE.
AH. WELL..

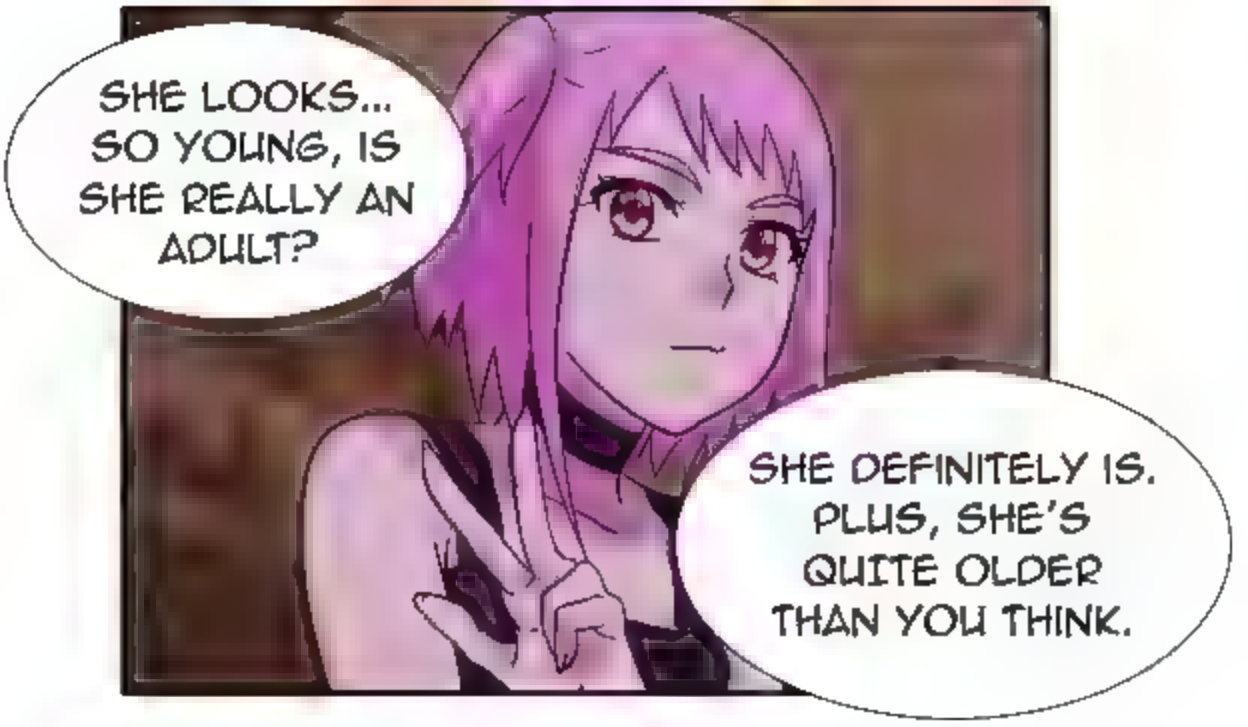

BOW
T-THANK YOU...

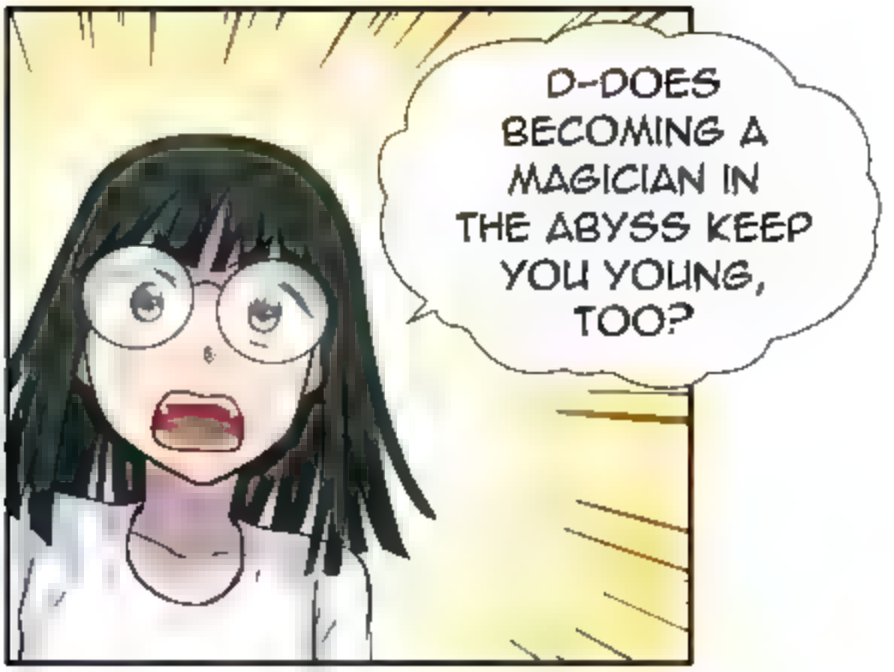

WHEW


I'M GOING TO WASH UP AND GET SOME REST. SO FINISH UP HERE AND SEE HER OUT, ALRIGHT?
BOSSY
OKAY.


SLAM


SO...
SHE'S YOUR MASTER?
HUH?
YEAH.

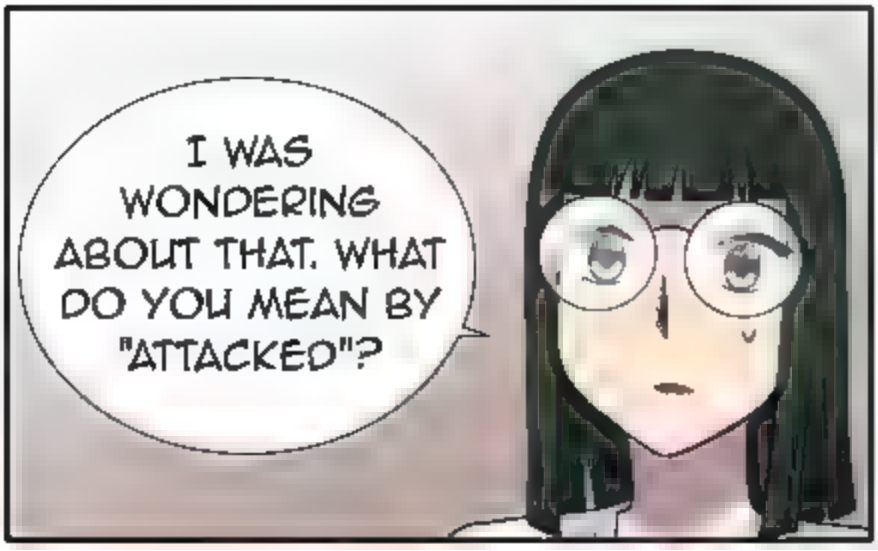

SHE LOOKS... SO YOUNG, IS SHE REALLY AN ADULT?
SHE DEFINITELY IS. PLUS, SHE'S QUITE OLDER THAN YOU THINK.

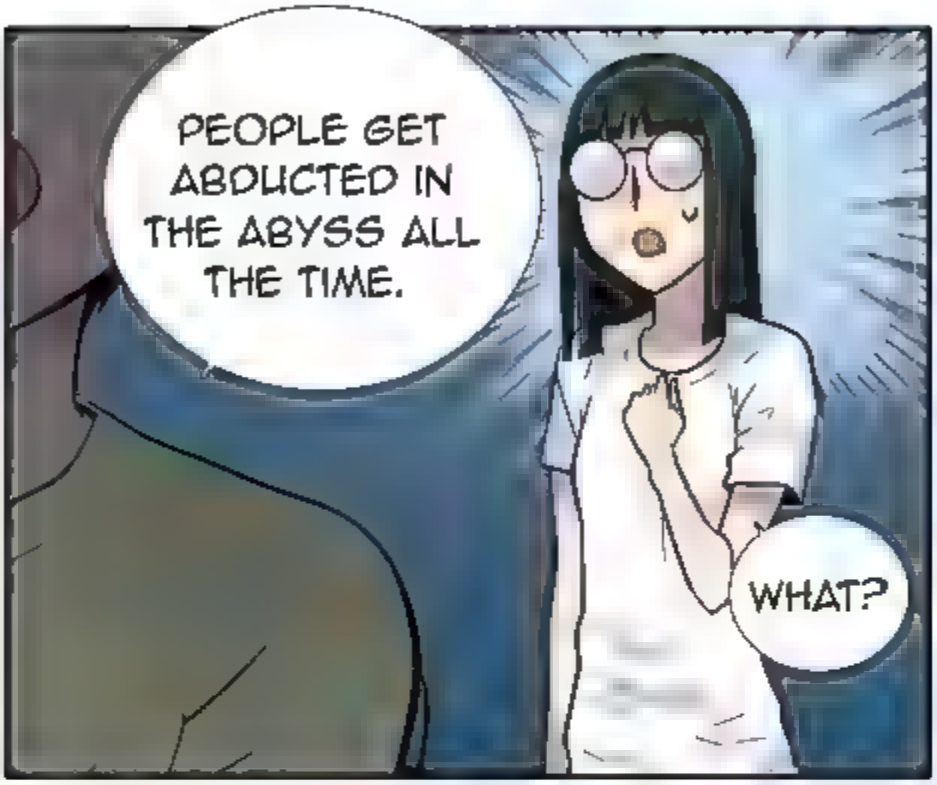

D-DOES BECOMING A MAGICIAN IN THE ABYSS KEEP YOU YOUNG, TOO?

I-I'M NOT SURE. I'M STILL A BEGINNER AT THIS WHOLE THING.

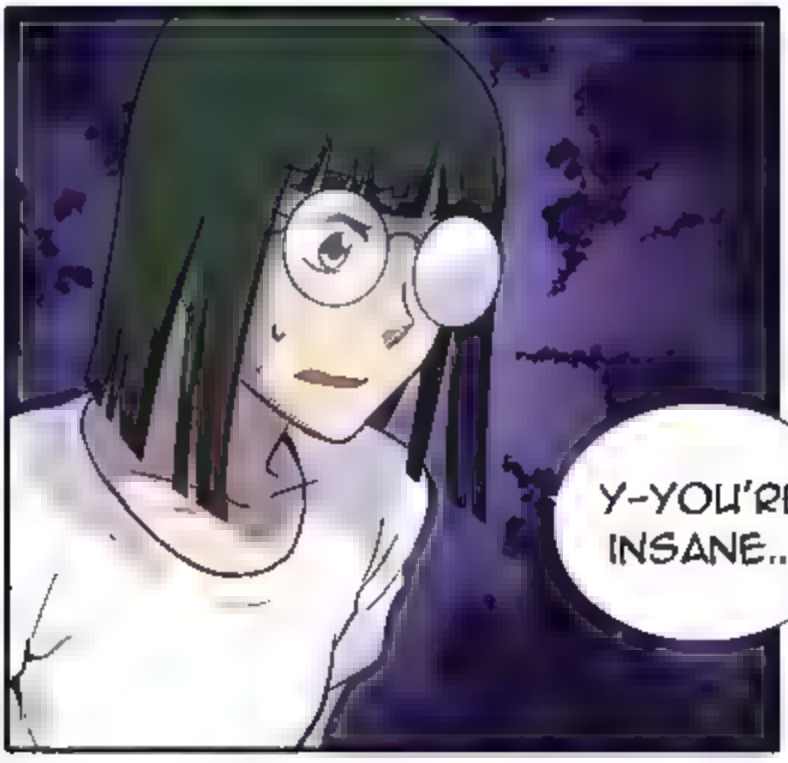
I'M SO... JEALOUS...
HEY. YOU'RE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL YOURSELF.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU HAVE TO START TAKING CARE OF YOUR SKIN WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG.
YEAH, YEAH. I GET IT..

LOOK.
THE ABYSS ISN'T A PLACE TO MESS AROUND WITH.
LIKE SHE MENTIONED BEFORE, YOU CAN REALLY GET ATTACKED.


I WAS WONDERING ABOUT THAT. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "ATTACKED"?


PEOPLE GET ABDUCTED IN THE ABYSS ALL THE TIME.
WHAT?

I TOLD YOU...


Y-YOU'RE INSANE...

THAT'S RIGHT.
TAP TAP
IT'S A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE GET KIDNAPPED AND TREATED LIKE MERCHANDISE.

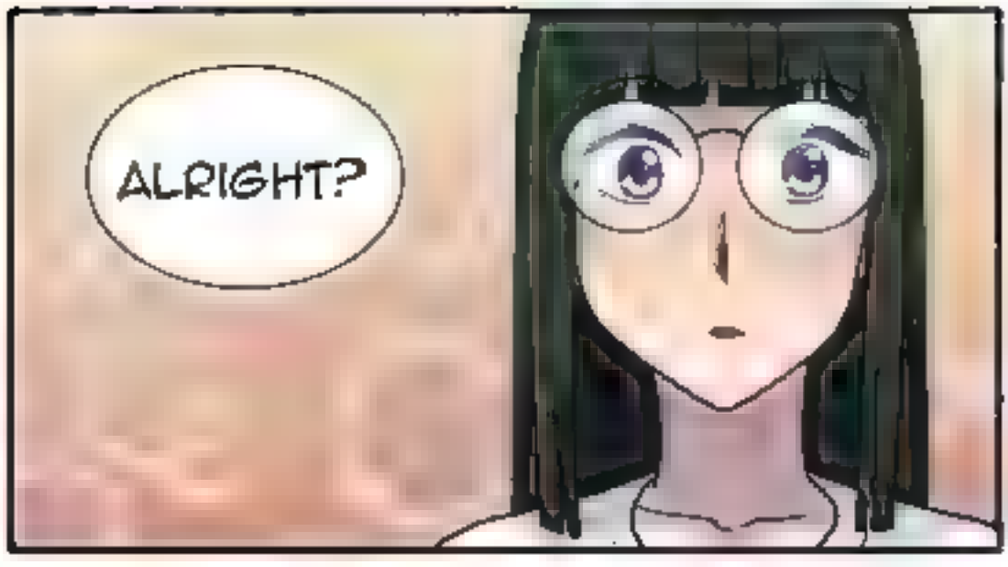
THAT'S WHY I SAID IT'S DANGEROUS.

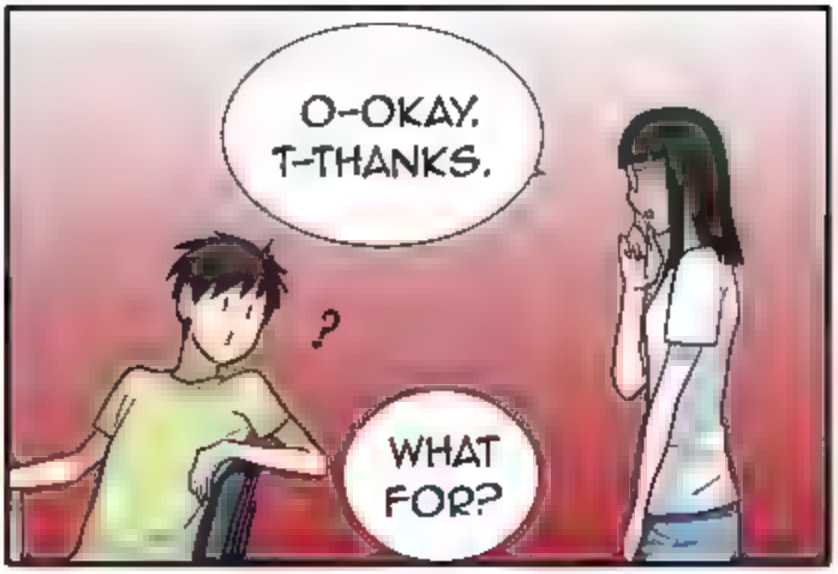
AND MY MASTER SAID THE SAME THING.

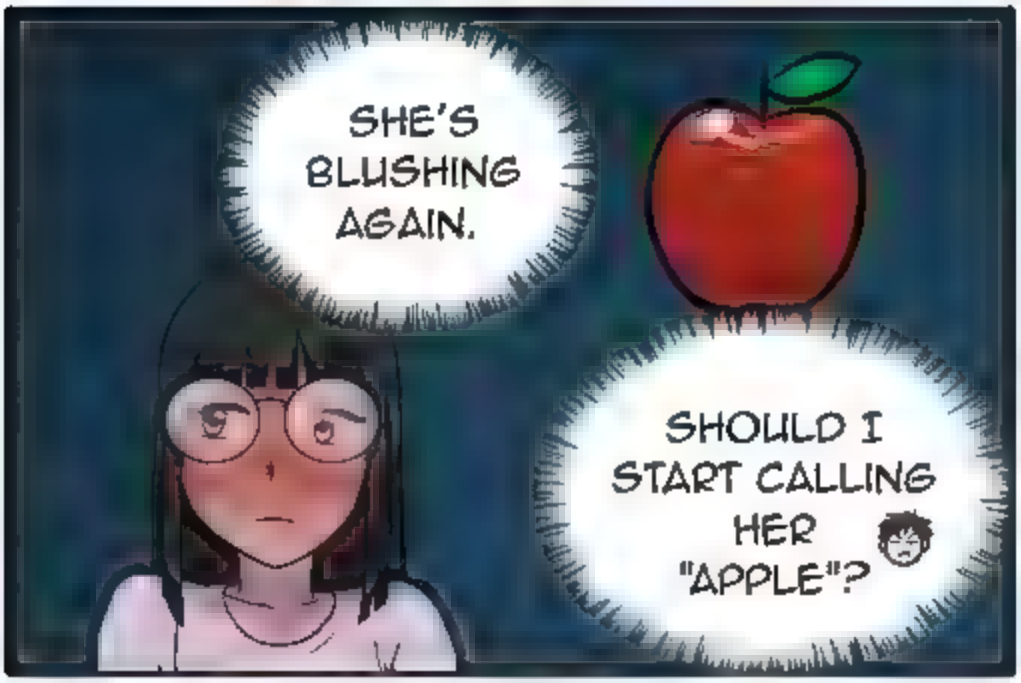
AND ACTUALLY, YOU ENTERING THE GREAT LABYRINTH ERA WAS PART OF THAT TOO, YOU KNOW.

ANYWAY... FOR NOW, I'LL SEE YOU OUT.

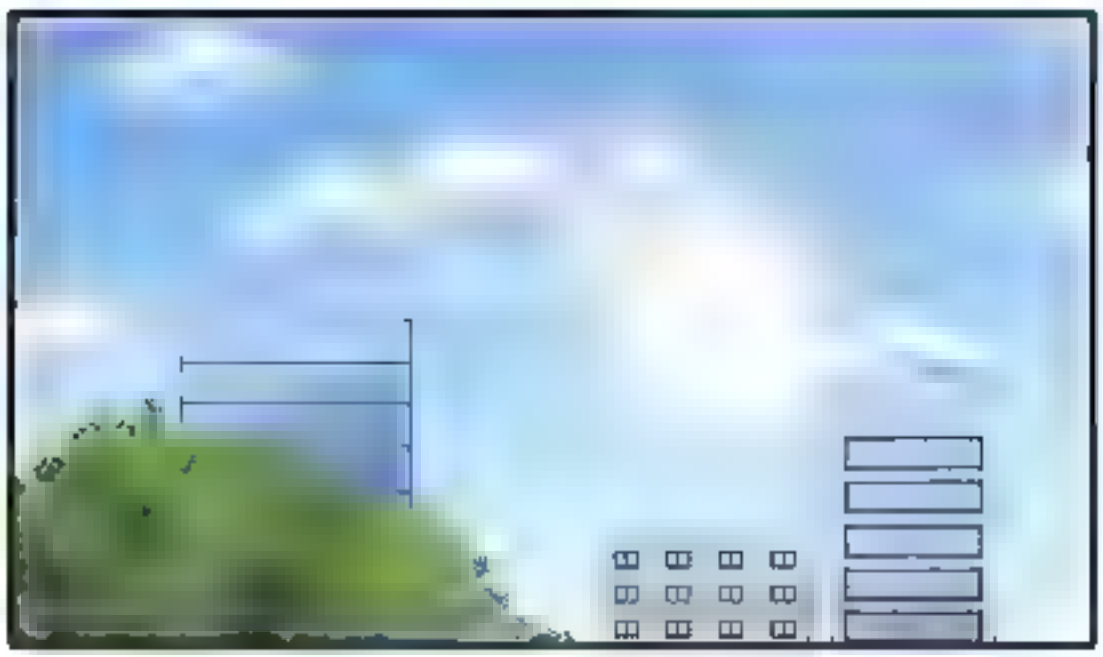
BUT FIRST I'LL GET YOU THAT HERMIT'S NECKLACE.
AH, AND JUST IN CASE, TAKE THAT WAND WITH YOU.

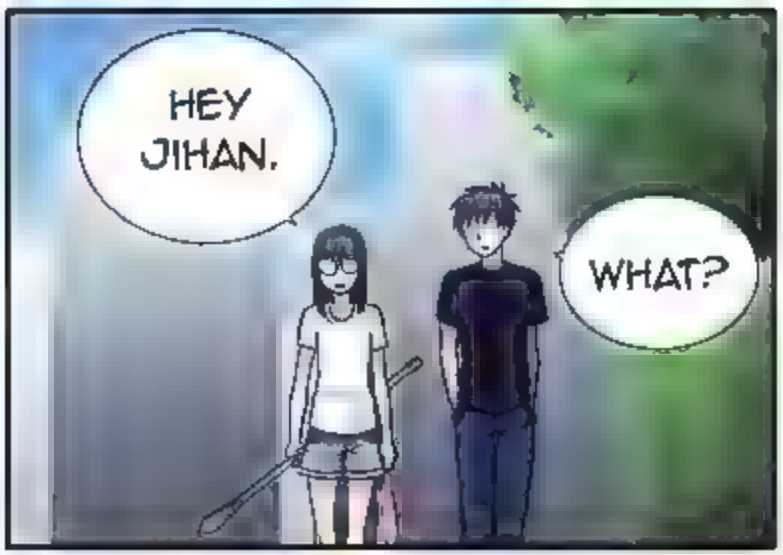

ALRIGHT?

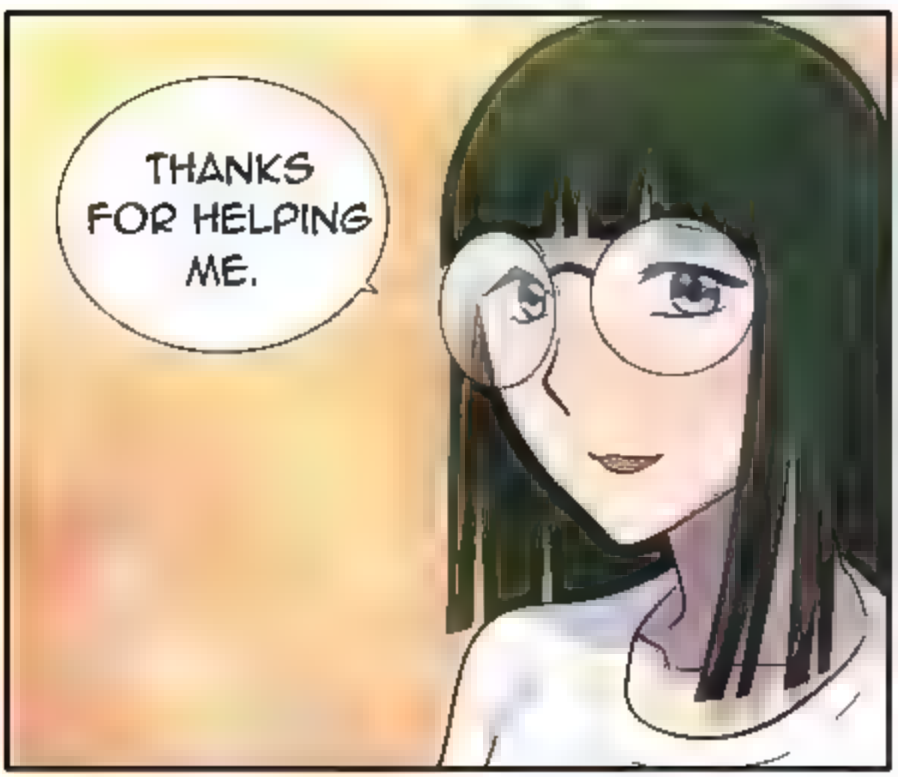

O-OKAY. T-THANKS.
?
WHAT FOR?


SHE'S BLUSHING AGAIN.
SHOULD I START CALLING HER "APPLE"?

THE GAMER




HEY JIHAN.
WHAT?


THANKS FOR HELPING ME.

I TOLD YOU NOT TO WORRY ABOUT IT.

BUT, I REALLY OWE YOU A LOT.
YOU EVEN GAVE ME THIS WAND.

YEAH, I DID...

BUT THAT WAND REALLY STANDS OUT.
I KNOW, RIGHT? IT LOOKS KIND OF WEIRD...
YOU'LL HAVE TO TELL PEOPLE YOU'RE INTO COSPLAY OR SOMETHING.

GIVE IT HERE. THIS WON'T WORK.
SNATCH

IF YOU CARRY SOMETHING LIKE THIS AROUND, IT MAY END UP ATTRACTING THE ATTENTION OF PEOPLE FROM THE ABYSS.
SSK
HUH? AHH..

UM. JIHAN?
YEAH? WHAT?

THERE'S SOMETHING I REALLY WANT TO TELL YOU...

WHAT IS IT?

WELL, I ACTUALLY...

HATED YOU.

LINE Webtoon